

**DRAFT<sup>1</sup>**  
**Beyond Waste Stakeholders Meeting Notes**  
**June 17, 2003**

The third meeting of the Beyond Waste Stakeholders Process convened at 9:00 a.m. in Seattle, Washington. Attending the meeting were: Chris Chapman, Angela Rae, Craig Lorch, Bill Reed, Gene Eckhardt, Lorie Hewitt, Jeff Kelley-Clarke, Norm LeMay, David Stitzhal, Brad Lovaas, Dave Nightingale, Suellen Mele, Jim Sells, Jerry Smedes, Cheryl Smith, Lynn Helbrecht, Damon Taam, Sally Toteff, and Holly Wescott. Dee Endelman facilitated the meeting and Eli Asher took notes.

Meeting Purpose

Dee Endelman led a round of introductions, reviewed the ground rules for the meeting, and provided a brief overview of the SWAC Subcommittee process to date, including a review of the agenda and desired outcomes for the meeting:

- Input to Ecology on the two remaining initiatives (Moderate Risk Waste & Performance Indicators);
- A “reality check” on the five initiatives as a whole, within the context of the Solid Waste Plan; and
- An overview of issues for the final meeting.

Summary of Themes

Cheryl Smith expressed appreciation for the high level of interest in the Project. She then reviewed themes that Ecology has gleaned from the first two meetings:

- It is important to examine the entire system, both solid and hazardous waste.
- The project seems to be on the right track.
- Cautions and concerns about Beyond Waste: is this zero waste?
- We need to be careful about how things are worded and presented.
- We need to acknowledge the good system that we have in place now.
- Participants did not note any fatal flaws in the Materials Flow Framework. The presentation of the Framework, however, did not include a detailed scientific analysis, so flaws could exist.
- Concerns were expressed about how Ecology reduced the 7 recommended initiatives to 5.
- We need to evaluate cost/benefits, and prioritize carefully and accordingly.
- We need more detail on many of the initiatives in order for stakeholders to respond.

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<sup>1</sup> Finalized notes will include the attachments referred to in this document.

- There are questions about how to measure performance.
- Stakeholders need context, i.e., to understand “how all the pieces fit together”.
- We need to continue to invite more people and organizations into this process.
- Why has Ecology chosen a 30-year plan (instead of the state-mandated 20-year plan)?
- We need to examine the business impacts of Beyond Waste.

After listening to Cheryl’s summary of themes, the group overall acknowledged that she had heard most of the major themes. Participants had several comments regarding those themes and others that they believed had not been captured:

- Participants did not note any fatal flaws in the Materials Flow Framework; this does not necessarily indicate consensus by the group on the accuracy of the Framework, or the level of expertise needed to critically examine the Framework.
- At least one participant had repeatedly noted that plan should take into consideration several issues: air, water, energy, and local governments.
- Support was expressed for the "Beyond Waste" title for public recognition, among other reasons.
- The list of concerns has been well captured, but each concern does not necessarily reflect consensus among group participants.
- The initiatives thus far have not addressed the technical waste stream, as well as materials such as medical waste and plastics (these are pressing needs that locals need help with).
- We'll need to select areas of focus within MRW.
- The Organics Initiative was heavily discussed during the last meeting, but is not mentioned in the summary of themes. Also, there is some confusion about the use of the term "organics."
- Is the solid waste system really in the position to reduce generation of wastes or is it “the tail wagging the dog”? Is it important to worry about landfill space, as well as air and water? We should look at toxicity and maybe power sources.

### Moderate Risk Waste Initiative

The facilitator introduced the Moderate Risk Waste (MRW) Initiative. The group had a brief clarifying discussion about the nature of MRW. In Washington, MRW is simply unregulated hazardous waste. Regulation is based on the quantity and the generator, not the nature or toxicity of the waste. The group also briefly discussed the meaning of product stewardship. One definition offered by a participant for product stewardship was: “... a shared responsibility in the lifecycle of a product from extraction to disposal, with the entity most able to institute change having the most responsibility for that product.” The group then discussed the initiative, including positive comments, concerns, and suggestions.

Individual participants voiced approval of the following aspects of the Initiative:

- This 30-year initiative rightly focuses on risk and toxicity, rather than just quantities of waste.
- More industrial generators will be locally monitored due to a decrease in the number of LQG's.
- The initiative focuses on reducing toxins in consumer products.
- Disposal cost burden will shift from government to manufacturers (and therefore to consumers through cost internalization).
- This initiative would help protect drinking water sources and reduce worker and citizen illnesses related to chemical exposure.

Participants listed the following concerns about the initiative:

- Making disposal “scarce and expensive” could increase illegal dumping, especially in rural areas.
- The initiative needs more explanation of policy, tax incentives, and free market incentives.
- The Initiative needs more players in the room to make this work, including governments and manufacturers.
- It needs more data: health statistics and studies, consumer information, research, etc.
- Perceived increases in operating costs may drive businesses away from the state.
- Increased product costs may drive consumers to purchase merchandise in Oregon and Idaho.
- If the Industrial Initiative works well, then industries will have smaller volumes of hazardous and toxic waste, increasing the number of Small Quantity Generators. The EPA does not address SQGs, and Ecology conditionally exempts them from most hazardous waste management regulations. Counties will have a difficulty with absorbing this additional cost.
- This initiative will be expensive, especially for smaller counties.
- What is a feasible role for Washington State?

Participants offered the following suggestions to strengthen the Initiative:

- The term “Moderate Risk Waste” needs to be changed to a more accurately descriptive term. The waste itself can be “high risk”; the “moderate” title relates to quantity but most people won't make that distinction.

- The format of the Initiative needs revision to become more linear, with more attention to prioritization. For example, prioritize actions according to risk (PBTs). The Initiative needs to focus less on waste and more on toxics in products.
- Effort needs to be focused on forming effective partnerships between the public and private sectors.
- New labeling information should be added to household and commercial chemical products that explains health hazards and toxicity. Bring in surrounding states and build national coalitions to make this effective.
- The Initiative needs incentives specifically for retailers to market less toxic products.
- Develop tax incentives and policy instruments to institute change.
- Keep “red tape” and bureaucracy to a minimum.
- Conduct more careful analysis of MRW in landfills- what are the effects? How much is out there? How toxic is it? How much is acceptable?
- Producer responsibility is a good alternative to the high costs to government of collecting MRW.
- Shifting disposal and recycling costs to manufacturers and consumers will drive design changes to create more environmentally and fiscally responsible products.
- MRW measurements are needed to determine how much is being collected, and/or the total toxicity we are removing from the environment.
- We cannot afford to apply hazardous waste requirements to MRW. Instead, we should pick specific waste streams to recycle like used oil, fluorescents and pharmaceuticals.
- Regulation should be focused on risk, not the source or the volume of the hazardous or toxic material.
- Add cost internalization to the strategy. Advanced disposal fees don't necessarily put any responsibility on the producer. Prices now reflect costs to get products in the store. Real impact is use of product--using energy. Build this into the prices of products.
- Might need more standards on products in order to reduce the toxins in them.
- Would be good to get product test data before a product is put on the market.
- Consider the cost of leachate collection system when MRW is present versus not present.
- Use potential health impacts to children as a reason to reduce toxics in products.
- Clear up mixed messages such as: “it's ok to put fertilizer on lawns, but if you don't dispose of it properly it will be a catastrophe.”
- The private sector has invested heavily in the current infrastructure- it should not be discounted. It can be modified to fit the new paradigm.

## Other Discussion

Many participants wanted more information, more time for discussion, and more participation from other groups. Several participants stated that this issue encompasses not only disposal, but also the prescribed use of toxics in the home and business. Increasing public awareness of toxic products such as herbicides, cleansers, and engine cleaning compounds will require a high level of effort from numerous groups. Some participants suggested reconvening this group after Ecology has revised and prioritized the initiatives.

## Performance Indicators Initiative

The group reviewed the Performance Indicators Initiative to prepare for discussion. Participants had several questions for Ecology staff regarding the initiative:

- Q: What is an “Environmental Management System?”
- A: An EMS is a program that a company adopts that is mandated by certifying agencies, such as ISO, and includes methods for continuous improvement on reducing toxins and wastes.
  
- Q: What is the relevance of these indicators to governments?
- A: Ecology wanted to track not only waste, but also social, economic, and environmental vitality. For example, reducing waste while destroying business would be irresponsible. We currently have data about only a small portion of the waste stream.
  
- Q: Where would all of this new data collected through this initiative go, and for what purpose?
- A: These numbers would go to the public, businesses, and government agencies.
  
- Q: Is this the final list of performance measures?
- A: No. This list is the starting point for longer iterative process. No specific performance measures have yet been proposed by Ecology. This list has been recommended as a preliminary list by the Cascadia-Ross consulting team and we are seeking input on it. We think that establishing the criteria for selecting performance indicators needs to be the next step before choosing the indicators themselves. If we have a good system in place to begin the process, mid-course corrections and additions will be easier to institute.
  
- Q: What does “achieve tracking Beyond Waste” mean?
- A: This refers to the development of tracking indicator wastes in order to track a greater portion of the total waste stream.

Individual participants noted the following positive aspects of the Initiative:

- This initiative seems to be on the right track: good evaluative techniques are extremely important.
- Goals and measurements are well linked.

The participants voiced the following concerns about the Initiative:

- Measurements may not be well accepted by business unless they have a degree of independence from Ecology, due to a fear of inaccurate representation of what is taking place in the waste stream.
- The criterion that an indicator should be easily understood by the public needs to be carefully considered: some indicators are not easily understood, but are still very important.
- A system without weighted criteria would be of limited usefulness.
- Numbers that are used as goals, indicators, etc., must be very concretely defined to be effective.
- Different counties and municipalities have different needs and abilities; “one size fits all” indicators will not work well.
- The Initiative does not seem to adequately address the costs and feasibility of collecting tracking data.
- Indicators tracking specific chemicals need to be carefully considered, since some hazardous materials are used specifically to reduce the production of other toxic materials.

Ecology asked participants to focus especially on the quality of the proposed criteria for evaluating indicators. Participants suggested the following with respect to these proposed criteria and the Initiative as a whole:

- Look at reducing large portions of the waste stream, versus focusing on small, expensive portions (more “bang for the buck”).
- Consider the following additional criteria and/or indicators:
  - Allows local governments to make good decisions;
  - Specific numbers, such as number of mercury poisonings, number of contaminated groundwater sites, number of take-back programs, etc.;
  - Criteria that can be directly linked to health statistics;
  - Achievability of goals, performance measures;
  - If there is 80% consensus on operability of a criterion, it's enough. Avoid issues with proprietary business concerns;
  - Indicator must bolster case for the desired changes;
  - Under “Criteria” add “accurate” and “current” to other data criteria already included, such as “timely”, “exciting”, etc.

- Ask the different target audiences what they think would be compelling measurements.
- Some indicators should be relevant to local government programs and be useful for measuring progress at the local level.
- Use performance measures as both indicators and drivers for the changes we want- this would be especially important in the toxic waste stream.
- Look to other groups in the state that are also developing similar indicators; look for ways that Ecology's indicators can match those developed by other groups.
- Criteria need to reflect environmental gain and toxics problems.
- Need to weight some criteria as more important than others.

### General Discussion of the Five Initiatives

The facilitator briefly reviewed the five initiatives to refresh the group's memory on the subjects. The group members provided the following comments and suggestions regarding the discussion of the initiatives thus far:

- Business should be viewed as a potential partner, not as an adversary, in the Beyond Waste Plan.
- It would be helpful to align the Plan timelines with other timelines, such as legislative sessions and the fiscal year so that results are clear and costs line up properly.
- Overall, the goals and action steps in each of the initiatives need to be more closely linked.

The facilitator distributed a handout that outlines the Beyond Waste Plan (Attachment 1). Cheryl Smith explained that the outline is in its fourth iteration, and is very streamlined as compared to prior versions. It is, however, still a draft and is open to comment and change. She also explained that the details found in prior drafts have not necessarily been abandoned. A few items may be dropped from the Plan, but most issues are being incorporated into the various initiatives instead of being listed by types of activity. For example, waste reduction is incorporated into the initiatives instead of standing alone. She then asked the group for any questions and comments.

Individual participants asked the following questions:

- Q: Why are you assuming that the two plans (Hazardous Waste and Solid Waste) are being combined into one?
- A: The two groups have been asked to work together to develop the Beyond Waste Plan, but separate plans may still result from this process.

- Q: A lot of the items in the initiatives are the most pressing issues- why aren't they being looked at separately? Also, where are the headings for topics such as recycling and waste prevention?
- A: Ecology has chosen to use the 5 initiatives as organizing tools. Plans for addressing issues such as recycling and waste prevention are within each of the initiatives.
- Q: Basic information such as transfer station and disposal facility statistics is important- where will this information fit into the outline?
- A: These will be detailed in sections 14 and 16.
- Q: Where does the technical waste stream fit into this outline?
- A: It is not included in this outline. Ecology knows that many aspects of the technical nutrient cycle issue are already being worked on but has chosen not to include it specifically in the Plan, primarily because we cannot work on all the important issues at once.
- Q: Will Ecology develop a list of evaluation criteria for goals and action steps within each of the initiatives?
- A: Yes. This is happening currently, and will continue.

Many participants expressed approval of the form and content of the outline. None suggested that any of the Initiatives be dropped, although several said that if Ecology felt compelled to drop one, they would suggest Green Building, at least for this iteration. Individual participants also responded to the question, "Are these the right priorities?"

- The technical nutrient cycle (especially E-waste) is not addressed.
- Mid-course corrections and review process is missing. We cannot effectively predict future conditions to the point that periodic change and review is unnecessary.
- Fractionalization of the current waste hauling system could have detrimental effects.
- There is an increasing burden on waste hauling industry to collect taxes for municipalities. This money does not necessarily go toward waste disposal, but rather to the general fund, which weakens the waste hauling system.
- Commercial recycling such as wood fiber has not been adequately addressed, especially as a technical nutrient.
- Most initiatives are "soft" policy initiatives rather than concrete, defined facilities.
- The 25% figure seems too high for the percentage of demolition and construction waste in landfills.



Individual participants also suggested the following in response to the outline:

- A link between MRW and Industrial Waste (if not combining them) would be helpful.
- Keep all the initiatives, but do less on each one.
- Develop criteria to help prioritize the recommended actions.
- The document would seem more coherent if the existing problems preceded the proposed solutions.
- Imbed education and recycling into each of the initiatives.
- Substitute another, more accurate term for MRW.
- A section added at the end of the outline as a placeholder for additional waste issues (such as the technical nutrient cycle) would be helpful.
- Producer responsibility is a key factor in several areas and should be addressed in the outline.
- Industry participation in determining priority of issues would be helpful.
- Initiatives should address the large amount of commercial paper that is not being recycled.
- Measurement and Reporting is the most critical initiative.

### Other Discussion

The group discussed several aspects of the technical nutrient cycle. Of particular interest was the importance of addressing E-waste in the plan as an important issue. The group also discussed increased recycling efforts and building markets for recycled technical nutrient products.

The group addressed the issue of using Beyond Waste as a title. Some participants felt strongly that Beyond Waste sent the wrong message about the plan, while others felt that it not only accurately reflected the intent of the plan, but that a mid-course change of title would be detrimental for the Project. One participant suggested using a subtitle to provide more detail without changing the title completely.

### Support for the Plan

In order to check the participants' level of support for the initiatives, the facilitator took a "full body survey." The participants lined up along a virtual continuum representing their level of support for the current version of the Beyond Waste Plan. She then asked each of the participants what would need to change in order for their individual levels of approval to increase. The participants gave a varied range of comments and suggestions:

- Specific responsibilities of the various entities need to be detailed.

- Governance, roles and responsibilities, and funding are the three most important issues: we need to see specifics in these areas.
- Funding issues need to be identified and rectified. Benefits will not be immediately apparent to consumers; anything that is done at a customer's expense should be to their benefit.
- Waste haulers have become tax collectors for municipalities.
- We need to know how this affects water, air, and energy issues. Specifically, we are looking for more benefits to small Eastern Washington counties.
- The current system should be the basis and resource for, rather than victim of, changes. This plan needs to be flexible in order to fulfill the needs of diverse communities, not "one size fits all."
- The state needs to take a leadership role in making these changes to the current system.
- The government sector takes a long time to plan, as well as act. This plan should more closely resemble a private business plan: clean, compact, and achievable.
- "Beyond Waste" seems to assume that we have done all that we can to collect recyclables. We need to continue to focus on those outstanding commodities.
- Beyond Waste needs to be authorized and sponsored at the highest levels of state government. We also need wider approval by other groups in the public as well as the private sector.
- Before committing to a plan like this, the financial implications must be clear.
- "Horizontal Height Regulation" type problems need to be eliminated before these initiatives can be implemented.
- Political will and leadership needs to be stronger in order to push this plan to completion. Ecology must be willing to take leadership and upset some people.
- The vision is worthwhile, but the action plan needs more detail, as well as more emphasis on partnerships.
- Want to be assured that whatever is done is in the best interests of consumers.
- When the major recycling effort took effect in 1989, there was social and political energy around recycling that does not exist today.
- We are beyond any fast and easy solutions. In order to be effective, good intentions need to be backed by solid detail.
- More outreach to affected groups.

#### Introduction of Topics for Final Meeting (Local Government Funding Study and Closed/Abandoned Landfills)

The facilitator distributed a draft outline entitled "Beyond Disposal Fees: Financing Integrated Solid Waste Management" (Attachment 2). Cheryl explained that the document is a brief description of the work done by Ecology's team of economists, with assistance from the Solid Waste Policy Forum and a few others. The paper does not have any conclusions yet, and may have some unanswered questions in the final

version. The paper examines alternatives for funding local solid waste non-disposal activities. Cheryl expects an economist that is working on this report to join the group on June 25. She requested that the group read this paper to prepare for discussion at the next meeting on June 25.

The group briefly discussed the current funding issues as well as potential problems that the Beyond Waste Plan could encounter.

Cheryl Smith described some problems with unaddressed closed and abandoned landfills. She explained that an issue paper was written on this topic two years ago and that it has been a subject of high interest to local government officials involved in the planning process to date. She distributed a short handout (Attachment 3) that outlines the recommended steps for addressing this issue, and some very rough cost estimates (based on extrapolations) for doing so. She emphasized that the cost numbers are highly speculative, and are based on a number of assumptions. One participant pointed out to the group that there were two general categories of old landfills. One category is pre-1963 landfills in which the waste was burned. The other category is landfills in use between 1963 and 1982, in which the waste was covered daily. The latter is thought to be more hazardous and expensive for cleanup.

The group adjourned at 3:45 p.m. The next meeting will take place at the Columbia Tower Club on June 25, 2003.